

SESSION 8

Travel Itinerary

PAUL PREACHES WHERE HE CAN

Bible Text

Acts 16:11-15,40; 17:1-4,10-12,16,17,19-23,33,34; Romans 15:20

Session Key Verse

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen." Isaiah 43:10

Session Goals

Today each child will—

- ◎ learn Paul started churches in a variety of places
- ◎ consider ways he too can tell others about Jesus

Christians' failure to witness is most likely caused by fear of what witnessing involves or a lack of concern for the lost. The lack of concern can be overcome by emphasizing to the children the eternal destiny of those without Christ. Also, as they pray God can soften the hearts of the unsaved. The fear of witnessing will be overcome through the baptism in the Holy Spirit and teaching on the "how-tos" of witnessing.



This session includes practical aspects to help the children become active sharers of the gospel. First, it reinforces the idea that a missionary is not the only one commanded to share the gospel; every Christian is commanded to tell about God's love through Jesus. Second, this session helps calm the fear of witnessing by dividing the "how-tos" of witnessing into three forms: lifestyle, answering questions about God, and inviting people to church. Pray that the Holy Spirit will empower your group to be bold witnesses for Him.

Unit Key Verse

Go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19,20



Explorer Orientation

OPENING ACTIVITY AND PRAISE

City Switch

(5-8 minutes)

Today we are going to learn how Paul told about Jesus and started churches in four cities. God also wants us to be a witness in the city where we live. We are now going to play a game where we will practice witnessing to people in nearby cities.

Have the children group their chairs in circles of 8 to 10 children each. Assign one worker to assist each group. Give the workers a copy of the city names list.

The workers assign each player in their group the name of a city. Choose one child to be the "witnesser." He should stand a few feet from the circle. He begins the game by using the list to say, "I'm going to witness to people in (name of city) by (suggests one way to witness) and to people in (name of another city) by (suggests another way to witness)," as mentioned under the "How To's Of Witnessing" segment or specific examples under "The Witnessing Game."

The two children whose city name was called must switch places with each other before the "witnesser" tags them. If a child is tagged, he becomes the "witnesser" and the first "witnesser" gives him the city name list.

Giving Time

(3 minutes)

Allow the children to participate in a time of giving to the Lord. You might want them to give an offering or participate individually in a special ministry.

Praise

(10 minutes)

Use the following suggested song from the Young Explorers cassette or CD: "He Has Called Me." Add songs of your own choosing for leading the children in a time of praise. Lead in prayer for this week's study.

Items Needed

- Photocopies of list with names of 10 local cities



Items Needed

- Young Explorers music CD or cassette



Exploring Session Goals

PRE-BIBLE LESSON ACTIVITIES

Announcements And Skit

(5 minutes)

Give announcements and any guidelines you have for the children to follow during this time. Use the optional skit titled, "Preaching Where You Can," found on page 134.

Items Needed

- Large stack of play money
- Marker



- Three large pieces of light-blue construction paper

A Universal Need

(5 minutes)

Prepare the paper by cutting a large circle out of each sheet. Write one of the following phrases in large letters on each of the three circles: How we look; How we live; How much money we have. Keeping the circles in the same order, flip them to the back sides, writing one word of this phrase on each, "Everyone needs Jesus."

Choose three children to come up front. Give them the circles, keeping them in proper order.

These blue circles represent the world. The phrases on them tell how people are different from one another in the world. Now let's pretend that you were given billions of dollars so you could help people who needed money.

Stand by the first child. Suppose you had a neighbor whose dad lost his job and the family —→ ⊙ needed money to keep them from losing their house. Would it matter if the family looked different from you because they were black or white or Asian or if the father was in a wheelchair or was blind? Of course not. They have a need and you can help meet the need. Hand the first child 1/3 of the money.

Stand by the second child. Suppose a tropical storm destroyed everything the people on the coast of Africa had. They needed money to rebuild their homes and replace their —→ ⊙ belongings. Would it matter to you if the people wanted to build huts instead of houses? Or that they hunt and farm for food instead of going to a grocery store? No, of course not. Hand part of money to the second child.

—→ ⊙ Stand by the third child. Suppose you then met a homeless person. Would you refuse to help him because he is different from you in the amount of money he has? That would be ridiculous! You would help him because he needed help. Give the last child the rest of the money.

If you had the money to help anyone who needed help, it shouldn't matter if they were different from you in the way they looked, or where they lived. People are people! They —→ ⊙ all need help. God loves everyone—young, old, rich, poor, black, white, or handicapped. God chose us to be His witnesses to people. Have the children flip their circles. He wants us to tell about Jesus because everyone needs Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can help anyone, anywhere who needs to know Jesus.



Exploring The Word

BIBLE LESSON

(10 minutes)

- Acts 16:11-15,40; 17:1-4,10-12,16,17,19-23,33,34; Romans 15:20

(Before the session, photocopy Overhead Master 5: Paul Scenes, from the Leader Resources onto a transparency. Then cut out, and color if desired, the figure of Paul and the three scenes. Use as directed in the Bible lesson.)

→◎ The apostle Paul's great desire was to preach the gospel where it hadn't been preached before. Today we are going to look at four cities where he did just that.

1. The Church In Philippi

Paul and his friends traveled to Philippi, a city in Macedonia named after Philip, a famous king of that area. Paul and his friends went down to the river looking for a place of prayer. Some women were at the river already. They were praying to God, but they did not know about Jesus yet. Paul told these women about Jesus. (Place the river scene and the figure of Paul on the overhead projector.)

One of the women was Lydia, a businesswoman. She opened her heart to the message about Jesus and became a believer. She even invited Paul and his friends to stay at her house with her family. The church in Philippi began at a women's prayer meeting by a river.

2. The Church In Thessalonica

The next place Paul and his companions went to was Thessalonica, a major city of Macedonia. They went to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day for 3 weeks. (Explain that the Sabbath is like our Sunday.) Who knows what a synagogue is? A synagogue is like our church. It was a building in which believers met to read Scriptures and worship God. However, they worshiped only God the Father. They did not know about or believe in Jesus, God's Son. Paul told them in the synagogue about Jesus.

(Remove the river scene and replace with the synagogue scene, placing the Paul figure in the middle of the scene.) Each Sabbath Paul would go to the synagogue and use the Old Testament Scriptures to show the people that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God the Old Testament talks about. Then many people believed in Jesus. The church in Thessalonica began in a synagogue.

3. The Church In Berea

Items Needed

- Bible
- Overhead projector



- Transparency made from Overhead Master 5: Paul Scenes

→◎ The next city Paul and his friends went to was Berea, about 90 miles from Thessalonica. Again, they went to the synagogue. The Bereans eagerly listened to the message and examined the Scriptures to see if what Paul was saying was true. Many believed the good news about Jesus. So the church in Berea also began in a synagogue.

4. The Church In Athens

→◎ The next city Paul went to was Athens. The people of Athens didn't worship God. Paul was upset to see the place full of idols. He began to talk about Jesus wherever people were gathered. Paul taught in the synagogues, but he also met people in the marketplace and talked to them there. (Replace the synagogue scene with the marketplace scene, putting Paul in the middle.)

The marketplace was kind of like an outdoor store. People went to the marketplace to buy food and other items they needed. Many people listened to what Paul was saying and wanted to hear more. They brought him to an important religious court and asked him to speak. Paul talked about an altar he had seen in Athens that said, "To an unknown God." He explained that the "unknown" God was the one true, living God. A few people believed and began to follow Jesus. That's how the church in Athens began in the synagogues, marketplace, and a religious court.

5. Everyone Needs Jesus

→◎ In these four cities, and many others too, Paul went wherever he had to go to talk to people who needed to hear about God. The places weren't important. What was important was there were people who had not heard the gospel. Paul preached by a river, in the marketplace, in the synagogues, and even in a religious court. Whatever the place, Paul faithfully told people they could receive salvation through Jesus.

Paul knew God loves everyone, no matter what they look like, where they live, or how much money they have. Each person is important to Jesus. Everyone should be important to us also.



Responding To The Word

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Prayer

(10 minutes)

Sing a few worship choruses to begin this part of the session.

Please close your eyes. If you are a Christian, but you are afraid to tell others about

Jesus, you can pray now for help to obey God. Ask God to help you be like Jesus so people will be able to see the difference in your life. Also ask the Holy Spirit for boldness to tell others about Jesus and invite people to church.

If you have not accepted Jesus as your Savior, you can do that today. He came to earth to die so people can be forgiven. He does not want anyone to be lost and not be able to go to heaven. Everyone has sinned. All you have to do is be truly sorry for your sin and ask Jesus to forgive you, and He will.

If you want to receive Jesus into your life, come and stand with me. As some respond, tell the others to think of two people at home, at school, or in their neighborhoods who do not know Jesus. They are to pray for God's help to share the gospel with these people as you pray with each one desiring salvation.

Airplane Toss

(10 minutes)

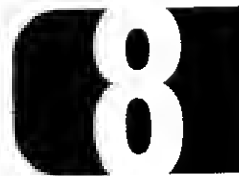
Ahead of time write the names of three continents on the three pieces of paper. Tape or staple each sign to a top flap of one of the boxes. Before the session begins, place the boxes in a row, with openings and signs facing the group. The extra planes will only be needed to replace planes that get bent. Carry the planes in your Bible.

Are you beginning to feel like a missionary? You should. You are like a missionary when you share the gospel with anyone, anywhere who needs to hear it. It could be your mom or dad. It could be your next door neighbor. It could even be the bully at school! It doesn't
→◎ **matter where you are or who it is, if someone is not saved or has a problem, you can share the good news about Jesus.**

Our key verse today says, "You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, 'and my servant whom I have chosen.'" That's wonderful—God has chosen each of you to be His witnesses! Repeat the verse with the group, pointing to each word as it is said, until the children are confident with it. Then group them into two teams.

As you can see, here in the front are three boxes labeled with the names of three continents. I have in my hand two airplanes. I am going to pick two people at a time, one from each team. They will both stand next to me about 10 feet from the boxes. Each one will get a chance to quote the key verse from memory. Whoever quotes it correctly gets 10 points for his team. If he quotes it correctly, he also gets a chance to send (throw) his plane with the gospel to one of the continents. If his plane lands in a box, it counts for an extra 10 points. The team with the most points will win our game for today. If a person does not quote the verse correctly, thank him for a good try and allow him to be seated. Continue the game until a good percentage of the group has played.

→◎ **Remember, fellow passengers, God has chosen you as His servants, His witnesses! Talk about Jesus every chance you get. Share the gospel with anyone, anywhere who needs to hear it!**

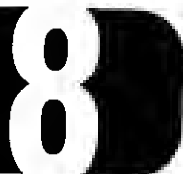


Items Needed

- Bible
- Key verse written on a transparency or chalkboard
- Three pieces of paper
- Marker
- Three large boxes
- Two or more paper airplanes with the word gospel written on them
- Tape or stapler

Items Needed

- Local map
- Large question mark cut from paper
- Invitation
- Flashlight
- Colored pushpins



- Chalkboard and chalk

The How-To's Of Witnessing

(10 minutes)

→◎ The apostle Paul was God's witness. In what cities was Paul God's witness? In Philippi Paul told Lydia and other women about Jesus. Lydia heard the message, believed it, and accepted Jesus. In Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens Paul told about Jesus. Many people believed and asked Jesus into their lives.

You are God's witness if you have asked Jesus to come into your life. Print "You are God's witness" on the chalkboard and underline it. There are probably people in your family or neighborhood who haven't asked Jesus into their lives. Some may not have heard much about Jesus. You can be God's witness to tell those people about Jesus because you know Him personally.

Mark your church location on the map. Let several volunteers place pushpins where they live. We live in different places. God has put us where we live to share Jesus there. Through each of us, everyone around us should have the chance to hear the gospel and accept Jesus as Savior.

→◎ You can tell others about Jesus in several ways. Print on the chalkboard "1. Answer questions about God and church." Let a child hold up the large question mark. When someone asks you about God or church, you can tell the person what you know.

→◎ Print "2. Invite people to church." Let a child hold up the invitation. You can ask people to go to church with you. You may even want to send invitations to your friends asking them to go to church with you when there's a special activity, such as a Christmas program.

→◎ Print "3. Treat others as Jesus wants." Let a child hold up the flashlight. More than just your words tell about Jesus. Your actions speak too. If you are kind and treat others as Jesus would want, people see there is something different about you. They will want to know what makes you different. Being kind is a reflection of Jesus in your life. It's like a light to others. They might ask you about your actions. You can explain that it's because you know and love Jesus that you are kind to everyone.

→◎ Paul's great desire was to preach the gospel where people did not know about Jesus. Many people in the world, even in your neighborhood, do not know the truth about Jesus. Some have never even heard His name; some have not heard the truth about Him. As God's witness, His chosen servant, you can tell others the true and good news about Jesus!



Applying The Word

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

The Witnessing Game

(10 minutes)

Every day we have many opportunities for witnessing. We must be alert so we won't miss an opportunity to show or tell someone about Jesus. Who can name one of the three ways to witness? Allow a response. Then review the three ways: inviting people to church, answering questions about God and church, and being like Jesus.

Draw a ticktacktoe grid on the chalkboard. Choose an X and O team. A team can place its "X" or "O" only when a team player can tell you which of the three types of witnessing a statement fits. Do one sample to be sure the children understand how to play.

→ 1. You ask the elderly man across the street to come to your church's children's musical.

→ 2. A friend at school attends the Mormon church. He wants to know what your church teaches.

3. A friend's brother was killed in an auto accident. He wonders if heaven is real.

4. Some kids at school are passing around a magazine you know is wrong. You refuse to look at the magazine.

5. Your Sunday School class is having an ice skating party. You ask a friend to come.

6. You invite your grandparents to watch you get baptized in water.

7. You had planned to play soccer with friends after school. Your mom says she needs your help around the house. You stay home to help her.

8. Someone asks you why your church takes Communion.

9. You are friendly to the new child at school and invite him to your church's Wednesday night kids' club meeting.

Items Needed

- Chalkboard and chalk or transparency
- Marker
- List of witnessing statements



Activity Sheets

(10 minutes)

See page 4 for suggestions on how to use Activity Sheets, pages 8-1 to 8-3.

"Sharing Jesus"

Session 8, page 1



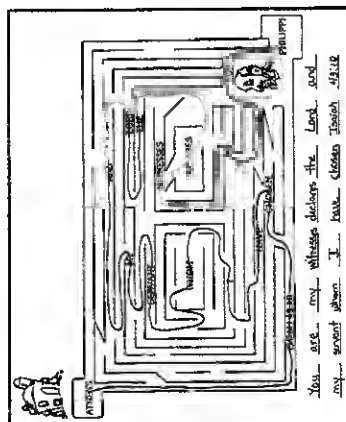
"His Witnesses"

Session 8, page 2



"Memory Maze"

Session 8, page 3



Items Needed

- Copies of Activity Sheets 8-1 to 8-3
- Pencils